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ABSTRACT

This packet is designed to assist mental health program administrators in planning and implementing more effective training and supervision for program staff, especially paraprofessionals. Training and supervision are combined in these materials because they represent two approaches to the same goal: the enhancement of the competence of current or future staff members and the improvement of services to clients. The packet deals only with general issues, and would need to be supplemented with more specific information in a particular area before training is given. The packet consists of: (1) a list of issues to be considered by anyone developing an education/training program; (2) selected annotations of articles and books in this area; (3) descriptions of college paraprofessional training programs; and (4) names of individuals and groups who have particular interest and expertise in this field. (Author)

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Education and Training of Paraprofessionals in Mental Health/Human Services: A Guide to Resources

February 1979

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Resource Packet Number 1

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

This packet is designed to assist you in planning and implementing more effective training and supervision for program staff, particularly paraprofessional staff. Training and supervision are combined here because they represent two approaches to the same goal: the enhancement of the competence of current or future staff members and the improvement of services to clients. This packet deals only with general issues and you will need to supplement it with information about the specific area in which training is to be given (i.e., counseling skills, prevention strategies, etc.).

This packet consists of:

A. A list of issues to be considered by anyone developing an education/training program.

B. Selected annotations of articles and books in the field of education and training.

C. Descriptions of college paraprofessional training programs. There are over 300 college programs offering AA and BA programs for paraprofessionals. We note two here in fields of mental health and human services as examples of models which might be adapted locally. These programs have generated written materials which describe their features in detail.

D. Names of individuals and groups who have particular interest and expertise in the field of education and training. A complete directory of individuals and groups working in the field is currently being prepared by the New Careers Training Laboratory (NCTL) in New York. These individuals or groups have developed particular methods or curricula and have done studies in the area. You may contact them directly.

ISSUES

Training and education of paraprofessionals may occur within an agency whose major purpose is providing service to clients, but which wishes to upgrade the skills and knowledge of its staff. Such agencies may provide in-service training, intensive workshops on specific problem areas, readings on relevant topics, and individual and/or group supervision. Both the evaluation of client progress and of the efficacy of personnel can be used as educational tools for increasing the skills of the staff members.

Training and educating paraprofessionls are also carried out by colleges and junior colleges. Since it is desirable in paraprofessional training to increase the linkage between theory and practice, most of the programs arrange agency-based field placements.

Both colleges and agencies, thus, face many of the same issues in providing effective and relevant training to paraprofessional workers. Coordination between colleges and agencies should be present, for such coordination can enhance the learning process for all parties involved. Agencies can benefit from a resulting increase in staff members' skills. Working paraprofessionals can benefit by obtaining college credits and improving their chances for job mobility. The college programs can benefit by a resulting increase in the quality and relevance of their curriculum.

Questions to be dealt with when devising an education/training

program, whether college- or agency-based, include:

1. What knowledge, skills, and attitudes are necessary for the performance of service functions by staff members? Because client needs often transcend the boundaries of the traditional disciplines, the content of education/training programs often does not neatly "fit" with a single discipline (e.g., psychology). Instead, the content of training programs should be developed from examination of the particular needs of the community, program philosophy, previous experience and current competence of staff.

2. Does the basis for the education/training curriculum flow from an analysis of the skills and knowledge necessary to perform particular jobs? While paraprofessional training tends to be generalist in focus, additional training in specific areas may be required to transmit the skills needed to perform specific tasks for special populations.

3. Does the paraprofessional have the background and skills for education, training, and on-the-job learning? The content and means of instruction should be tailored to the level of the paraprofessional. Some paraprofessionals may need basic training in "how to learn" or "how to work effectively in an organization" before moving to more traditional education/training content.

4. Are teacher and supervisors sensitive to the particular learning styles of the individuals they teach? Some education/training programs have failed because they were not designed to

deal with the special strengths and problems of adult learners, minorities, and/or working students.

5. Is supervision being used as an important route for training and educating paraprofessionals? The supervisor functions as: an educator, helping to operationalize knowledge: a role model, conveying performance expectations and values of the organization; and a facilitator, communicating between line staff and the administration. Paraprofessionals as well as professionals are being used to train and supervise other paraprofessional staff members in specific areas.

6. Do job supervisors understand and accept the content and goals of paraprofessional training programs so that they can reinforce the training on the job? In several instances, paraprofessionals were taught certain skills but their supervisors did not support this training on the job and thus the skills were never practice

7. Are the on-the-job training, in-service training, and academic course work components of training linked in an effective manner? Do academic instructors and supervisors coordinate their efforts? Are curriculum programs designed so that theoretical learning and practical application enhance each other?

8. Are there a variety of methods available to transmit knowledge and skills? Academic classes are just one method of acquiring knowledge. Both colleges and agencies should examine the possibility of providing academic credit (and, thus, career advancement) for the skills acquired by paraprofessionals as the result of on-the-job

experience, in-service training, and life experiences. Competency based education models are one strategy for doing this. "Portfolio" documentation of existing skills is another.

9. How are paraprofessionals' knowledge and skills assessed? Since the skills paraprofessionals are acquiring are complex, a comprehensive evaluation of an education/training program may require a variety of measurements, including:

a. Process evaluation of the training program itself -- its relevance, interest, and quality of presentation;

b. Changes in skills measured by written or oral exams, papers, or learning projects; changes in skills assessed by observing the trainees' behavior through simulation techniques or role play;

c. Changes in the trainees' actual performance on the job.

Criteria for evaluation should reflect both the values of the organization and the intended effects of the tasks the paraprofessionals are to perform. Evaluation should provide information to improve paraprofessional performance in an ongoing fashion, as well as an after-the-fact assessment of competencies. Formal written evaluation, given periodically, does not usually provide feedback sufficient for the paraprofessional to use in improving her/his performance.

10. The ultimate evaluative test of a training program would be the impact and the measurement of results to the client and agency. Although the line from training to client impact is rarely direct, this

measurement tends to reveal positive performance as well as deficiencies.

11. How does the education/training program contribute to the career mobility of the paraprofessional staff members? Can their in-service and on-the-job training and experience be counted as the equivalent of college credit toward a degree? Is credit received at the community college transferrable to a BA level program?

12. Will the agency provide a job ladder for the paraprofessional? Is the agency planning for upward mobility and in-house recruitment for filling professional position vacancies; this would need to be part of agency policy and practice.

13. In order to have mobility and impact within an agency the paraprofessional needs to be knowledgeable about the organizational structure, administration, policies and procedures. Training in these areas may not be included in a college program and can be supplemented by in-service training. Paraprofessionals and professionals are empowered by an awareness of the context in which they work. The agency is enhanced by having workers who can make an informed contribution to organizational development.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND BOOKS

Alley, S.R., Blanton, J., Feldman, R.E., Hunter, G.D., & Rolfson, M.
PARAPROFESSIONALS IN MENTAL HEALTH: TWELVE EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS
Flushing, N.Y.: Human Sciences Press, in press.
Available from: Social Action Research Center, 18 Professional Center Parkway, San Rafael, Calif., 94903.

Presents case studies of 12 mental health programs located throughout the country. In addition to information on training and supervision in many of the chapters, one of the appendices focuses explicitly on the supervision of paraprofessionals in an outpatient program.

Baker, E.J., & McPheeters, H.L.
MIDDLE-LEVEL WORKERS: CHARACTERISTICS, TRAINING AND UTILIZATION OF MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATES
Community Mental Health Journal, Monograph Series, 1975, 8, 67.

Rated mental health associates (MHAs) on characteristics and performance before and after training. Supervisor reactions were generally favorable because MHAs were seen as more dedicated than workers trained in traditional health-related fields, despite the fact that they seemed to lack self-confidence and to need more supervision.

Brager, G. & Holloway, S.
CHANGING HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS: POLITICS AND PRACTICE
New York, New York: The Free Press, 1978.

This book focuses on the process of planned changed within human service organizations. There is emphasis on practice; the resources available for "on-line" workers in influencing organizational decision making. It explores change from below and the empowerment of workers through organizational knowledge.

Danish, S.J., & Hauer, A.L.
HELPING SKILLS: A BASIC TRAINING PROGRAM (TRAINEE AND LEADER'S HANDBOOK)
New York: Behavioral Publications, 1973.

A 10-week training course with weekly sessions of 2 1/2 hours. Discusses the following topics as a means toward effective training: (1) some guidelines about training; (2) a basic model for teaching

helping skills; (3) possible trainee reaction to various training procedures; (4) methods of handling trainee reactions; (5) pitfalls and problems encountered in training; and (6) changes of training to accomodate different groups of trainees.

Gartner, A. (Ed.)
COLLEGE PROGRAMS FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS: A DIRECTORY OF DEGREE GRANTING PROGRAMS IN THE HUMAN SERVICES
Flushing, New York: Human Sciences Press, 1975.

Contains nearly 1,000 programs for paraprofessionals in the human services and provides immediately accessible information leading to careers in hospital and mental health centers.

Goldstein, A.P.
STRUCTURED LEARNING THERAPY: TOWARD A PSYCHOTHERAPY FOR THE POOR
New York: Academic Press, 1973.

Investigates causes of the shortcomings and ineffectiveness of psychotherapy with low-income patients, presenting a new approach. Topics discussed include the complex interaction between social class and psychotherapy; the use of such procedures as modeling, role playing, and social reinforcement in increasing the adequacy of interpersonal functioning and related skills among poor patients; and the use of structured learning techniques in teaching therapeutic skills to paraprofessionals.

Kaslow, F.W., & Associates (Eds.)
SUPERVISION, CONSULTATION, AND STAFF TRAINING IN THE HELPING PROFESSIONS
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977.

Though this book does not focus specifically on paraprofessionals, it provides related information from different perspectives. Chapters cover such issues as: (1) the role of the organization; (2) supervisors as educators; (3) group supervision of students and staff; (4) community mental health centers; and (5) future trends.

Ludwig, A.K., & Glass, B.S.
LINKING CONTINUING EDUCATION TO SERVICE DELIVERY: A MANUAL FOR NEGOTIATING EDUCATIONAL AGREEMENTS

This manual presents a model for continuing education which involves the provider and recipient. It considers the necessity for curriculum to fit the needs of the learners and the priorities of the organizations they represent. Five phases of negotiating educational agreements are described: (1) preparation, (2) entry, (3) negotiating for specifics, (4) evaluation, and (5) feedback.

McPheeters, H.
TRAINING, SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION OF PARAPROFESSIONALS IN MENTAL HEALTH
In S.R. Alley, J. Blanton, & R.E. Feldman (Eds.), Paraprofessionals in

Mental Health: Theory and Practice.
Flushing, N.Y.: Human Sciences Press, in press.
Available from: Social Action Research Center, 18 Professional Center Parkway, San Rafael, Calif., 94903.

Describes the common characteristics that appear to make paraprofessional training programs effective, and reviews some principles relevant to the staff member development activities of supervision and employee evaluation. Within this framework, covers topics that include: (1) the relevance of life experience; (2) pre-service formal education; (3) orientation on the job; (4) the need for supervision of new employees; (5) the nature of supervision for new employees; (6) in-service training; (7) competency-based, experiential, and other approaches to training; (8) field training; (9) goal setting; (10) techniques of supervision; (11) the termination of employees whose performance is unsatisfactory; and (12) approaches to and uses of evaluation.

Moore, M.
TRAINING PROFESSIONALS TO WORK WITH PARAPROFESSIONALS
Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1974, 4, 308-312.

Provides a blueprint for systematically training mental health professionals to work effectively with their paraprofessionals; delineates several qualifications and skills requisite for such professionals; develops a training model for acquisition of skills; and follows an example of one skill through the training model.

Nash, K.B., & Mittlefehldt. V.A.
SUPERVISION AND THE EMERGING PROFESSIONAL
American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1975, 45, 93-101.

Presents a model for the training of supervisors for new professionals; highlights concepts, principles, and methods of supervision. Emphasizes such issues as entry, race, class, sex, and upward mobility of the emerging professional in the established mental health system.

Southern Regional Education Board
A GUIDEBOOK FOR MENTAL HEALTH/HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAMS AT THE ASSOCIATE DEGREE LEVEL
Atlanta, Ga.: Southern Regional Education Board, 1976.

Serves as an aid for program directors, college officials, faculty persons, advisory committee members, and agency field instructors in planning, administration, and instructuion in mental health/human service programs.

COLLEGE PROGRAMS

COLLEGE FOR HUMAN SERVICES
201 Varick St.
New York, N.Y. 10014

Audrey Cohen, President
2640 College Ave.
Berkeley, Calif., 94704

Rhoda Kaufman, Dean

The focus of College for Human Services is on empowering students and citizens to develop the skills necessary to manage their own lives and make creative contributions to society. The curriculum is organized by performance areas which include: self-assessment; preparation for practice; establishing professional relationships; working in groups; teaching; counseling; community liaison; supervision; and management of change. These performance areas are conceptualized as "crystals" in which development is assessed in five dimensions: purpose; values; and self and others; systems; and skills. Collaborative relationships have been developed with a wide variety of human service agencies. Students spend three days a week working in an agency and two days a week in the classroom.

The college grants a BA and MA degree in human services.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
School of Community Service and Public Affairs
New Careers in Mental Health Program
Eugene, Oreg., 97403

Participants in this program are primarily non-credentialed workers employed in a variety of mental health and human service agencies. The interdisciplinary curriculum is offered at both AA and BA levels and includes: (1) work-based education, e.g., supervised field and independent study, and in-service training; (2) site-delivered core seminars, e.g., introduction to community mental health; program development and evaluation; (3) site-delivered coursework, e.g., biological sciences; english composition; sociology; (4) campus-based coursework, e.g., economics; special education.

PEOPLE AND GROUPS

Danish, Steven J., & D'Augelli, Anthony B.
COLLEGE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Pennsylvania State University
College Park, Pa. 16802

Over a period of several years these two researchers have collaborated on designing and evaluating training programs oriented toward paraprofessionals and members of community support systems. Their earlier work focused on a helping skills training program. More recently, they have focused on a set of training programs designed as a totality to prevent mental health problems and build community strength.

Goldstein, Arnold P.
Department of Psychology
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
150 Marshall St.
Syracuse, N.Y. 13210

Arnold Goldstein has developed "structured learning" training programs for paraprofessionals and other relevant service providers. This approach incorporates social learning principles both in the teaching of skills to service providers and to clients. One program has focused on skills needed by the poor. Another program has focused on skills needed by persons whose repertory of basic community living skills is limited.

Harvey, Mary and Passy, Lynn E.
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON 119 Morton Street
School of Community Service and Public Affairs New York, N.Y. 10014
Eugene, Oregon 94703

Mary Harvey and Lynn Passy have worked extensively in the New Careers movement and most recently directed the University Based New Careers project at the University of Oregon. They have co-authored a paper about that program which will appear in Paraprofessionals in Human Services, Stanley S. Robin and Morton O. Wagenfield (Eds.), Human Sciences Press, (in press).

Dr. Allen Hauer
Winnebago Mental Health Institute
Winnebago, WI. 54985

See Danish and D'Augelli

Kalafat, John
Lay, Joe M.
COUNSELING AND CAREER CENTER
Fairleigh Dickinson University
1000 River Road
Teaneck, N.J. 07666

The program developed by these two researchers consists of 40 hours of training in counseling skills using didactic and experiential modules. It includes: (1) critical incidents for trainers and guidelines; (2) the development of selection procedures; (3) use of feedback as an interpersonal skill; (4) roleplay in small groups. The focus of this program is to teach problem solving through the mutual exploration and active participation of the trainers and modeling by the trainer.

Nash, Kermit B.
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
University of Washington, Social Service
BB322 University Hospital, RD-30
Seattle, Wash., 98195

Kermit Nash has been involved with the Center for Paraprofessional Evaluation and Continuing Education at Yale University. He has developed training programs for paraprofessionals and for the supervisors of paraprofessionals. Dr. Nash was an editor of the Yale Monograph on Paraprofessionals, The Paraprofessional: Selected Readings. This monograph may be obtained by writing to: Paraprofessional Manpower Development Branch, National Institute of Mental Health, Parklawn Building, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Md., 20852.

NEW CAREERS TRAINING LABORATORY
City University of New York
33 West 42 St.
New York, N.Y. 10036
Riessman, Frank; Gartner, Alan; Pugh, Mildred.
Newsletter Editor: Podbielski, Susan

The New Careers Training Laboratory (NCTL) has been concerned with the education, training, and utilization of paraprofessionals since its establishment in 1968. In collaboration with the Social Action Research Center, it has been funded by the Paraprofessional Manpower Development Branch of the National Institute of Mental Health to establish the National Education Center for Paraprofessionals in Mental Health. NCTL will be conducting regional conferences that involve agency and state department personnel, educators, training institutions, and paraprofessionals. They will establish a networking system and will develop methods of disseminating information on paraprofessionals in mental health. One such activity will be a bimonthly newletter.

SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD
130 Sixth St.
Atlanta, Ga. 30313
McPheeters, Harold; Benton, Art; Jacobs, Ed

SREB has done extensive work relating to paraprofessionals in mental health. They have studied curriculum development, recruitment of students, training of faculty, and the utilization of paraprofessionals. They are currently in a Worker Certification project. One of the activities of this project is the development of competency statements to be used in the training of paraprofessional mental health and human service workers.